A SERMON CONCERNING THE EPIPHANY;

PREACHED AT THE Cathedrall Church of Christ in *Oxford.*

By RICHARD GARDYNER, D. D. and *Canon* of the same *Church.*

OXFORD,
Printed by LEONARD LICHFIELD, and are to be sold by MATTH. HVNT.
Anno Dom. 1639.

A

TO

THE RIGHT *REVEREND FATHER* IN GOD,

IOHN,

LORD-BISHOP OF *OXFORD*, my much Honour'd *Dioceſan*.

My Lord,

I Am as full of *hope* as *deſire* that your *Gentleneſſe* will helpe into the *light* this *baſhfull* Piece of my *Compoſure*. For having long liv'd in the *Sun-ſhine* of your Favour, it may

well be expected that ſomewhat of mine ſhould bee *colour'd* with the *beames*. The *Argument* being the *wiſe mens* devotion claimes a peculiar Intereſt in your *religious* protection, ſince 'tis *demonſtratively* evident that the Example of their *piety* hath made a conſpicuous *reflection* on your *practiſe*, which ſpares *no Coſt* that *God* may be *ſerv'd* like *Himſelfe*.

We have ſeene their *well-grounded* faith, which *S. Peter* calls *Luciferum in cordibus*, appeare in the franke, and free Largeſſe of your Love to *Chriſt*. The ſacriledge of former times purloyn'd the *holy treaſures*, challeng'd the ſetl'd *manſions* of your *Sea* for their owne by *Law*, as if they mean'd you ſhould

be

be knowne to be the *most Christian Bishop* in having with *Christ* no *house* left to *repose* your *head* in, nor *Chappell* standing, wherein you might offer up *Attonement for them.*

To remove this scandall your *Exemplary* munificence ayded by *Soveraigne Power* hath *given* out of your *Cofers* to the Church, what others have *taken away* from the Church to *store* their *Cofers.* So that through your Lord-ships bounty we may now againe say *here* stands the *Lords Oratory*, and *This* is the Bishops *Palace.* Heretofore the *Evangelicall* Altar was plac'd so *incongruously* throughout the whole *Diocesse* that a *Proselyte* might easily mistake it for a *secular* Table, or *common*

Boord:

Boord: now it hath that exact *position*, which is consonant to the *Primitive* Times. To prevent a *promiscuous* imployment of our Cathedrall *Utensills* your pious Zeale hath *stampt* Gods *Marke* upon them, whereby none may dare to alter the *propriety*, nor pollute them with *profane* uses. And thus you have *walked* in the *steppes* of wise men both in the *Substance*, and *circumstance*, which makes me confident that this *Narration* of the *wise mens* diligent enquiring, and devout worshipping our *Saviour* will find a gracious acceptance, being humbly presented to your *Fatherly indulgence* by

Your Lordships obliged to serve

you in all Canonicall obedience.

RICHARD GARDYNER.

TEXT 2. C. V. 2.
Of the Goſpell by Sᵗ Mathew.

Where is he that is borne King of the Iews? For we have ſeene his ſtarre in the Eaſt, and are come to worſhip him.

I Have heretofore re-related the *Iournall*, & *Geſtes* of the Progreſſe, which the *Magi* made to *Ieruſalem*, taking my *Riſe* at the firſt verſe, as at the firſt *Stage* of their ſetting forth. Now quite to leave them there, and upon no opportunity to reflect on the *Motive*, and *End* of their Journey; what

Boord: now it hath that exact *positi-on*, which is consonant to the *Primitive* Times. To prevent a *promiscuous* imployment of our Cathedrall *Utensills* your pious Zeale hath *stampt* Gods *Marke* upon them, whereby none may dare to alter the *propriety*, nor pollute them with *profane* uses. And thus you have *walked* in the *steppes* of wise men both in the *Substance*, and *circumstance*, which makes me confident that this *Narration* of the *wise mens* diligent enquiring, and devout worshipping our *Saviour* will find a gracious acceptance, being humbly presented to your *Fatherly indulgence* by

Your Lordships obliged to serve you in all Canonicall obedience.

RICHARD GARDYNER.

TEXT 2. C. V. 2.

Of the Gospell by St Mathew.

Where is he that is borne King of the Iews? For we have seene his starre in the East, and are come to worship him.

Have heretofore re-related the *Iournall*, & *Gestes* of the Progresse, which the *Magi* made to *Ierusalem*, taking my *Rise* at the first verse, as at the first *Stage* of their setting forth. Now quite to leave them there, and upon no opportunity to reflect on the *Motive*, and *End* of their Journey; what

were it but with the *Foxe* in the *Fable* to lick the *outside* of the Glaſſe, and not to taſt the *ſweetes* that are within it, or in the words of *Nazianzen* ἀπὸ τῆς σκιᾶς ἐπαινῶ τὸ ἀνδριάντα, to commend a goodly *Statue* frõ the *ſhadow* it caſts, and to paſſe by τὰ μείζω, καὶ τελεώτερα, thoſe perfections, which deſerve our *chiefe* commendations. The *Tueſday* Courſe then being almoſt contiguous to their *Solemne* Feſtivall ſeaſonably reverted me to a ſurvay of this ſecond verſe, ſince therein we may diſcover the maine *drift* of their *travell*, & *expence*. Our *Dialect* renders them *Wiſe men*, and ſignificantly too: For at their firſt arrivall they did not weare away the *Spanne* of their time in deſcrying the *Gaudes* and *Glories* of the Citty, in trifling about impertinent, & frivolous Queſtions, but like *Wiſe men* indeed they forthwith propound a *religious* demand, ſaying, *Where is He, which is borne King of the Iews?* And yet I feare the worldly wiſe will take them for none of the wiſeſt in regard of that *forme* of *Intergatory*.

Naz. Orat. 11.

The

The method of humane Policy preſcribes Travellers to ſet a watch before their mouthes, to bee *thrifty* of their language when they converſe with forreine Nations, becauſe a παῤῥησία, or freedome of ſpeech in ſuch betrayes *levity*, and hazards *ſafety*. Theſe then may ſeeme to be *nicknam'd* Wiſemen, onely in an *Irony*, for who would not eſteeme it rather an inſolent *preſumption* then well weigh'd *diſcretion* to diſpute the *Rights*, and *Proprieties* of a Crowne; to raiſe a bruit of a *Naturall* King newly borne when another is elected, and *eſtabliſhed* in the *Throne*? Such an affront as this is able to ſtrike fire out of the dulleſt *Prince*, much more out of *Herod*, who as he was a *Foxe* in ſubtlety, ſo he ſhew'd himſelfe a *Lion* in Cruelty. For when their *Errand* was preſented to his Eares his enraged jealouſie burn'd ſo fiercely that it *ſuck'd* up the bloud of all the *Male* Infants within the Coaſts *of Bethlē*. And had not an heavenly inſpiration diverted theſe *Nuncios* from the intended way of their *Returne*,

their bloud also should have runn'd among the *Ingredients*, and made up the *dose* to allay his fury.

But the *Babe-slayer* needed not thus to rave, *Christ's* susception of our Nature was no way *ominous* to his usurped Title. Hee came, saith S. *Mathew*, to *minister*, *and not to be ministr'd unto*. Tis true, He was a *King*, *Pilate* an Infidell to the *preiudice* of *Cæsar*, his Emperour, & with *hazard* of his owne life stil'd him so at his death, as those strangers did at his *Birth*. Yea himselfe confess'd it, *Mark* 14. & his *Father* confirm'd it. Pl. 2. *At Rex fuit in Sæculo*, *non de sæculo*: yet he was no *Temporary* Monarch *of* this Earth, but the King *Eternal* who hath all power *in* heaven, and *in* Earth, and so he was not to *succeed* any, nor any other him. Indeed his *Royall* Descent, & proximity of succession to the *Crown* might have claim'd the *Throne* of his *Father* David, the externall *Monarchy* of all *Iewry*. For both by *Ioseph* his *Legall* Father, and *Mary* his *Naturall* Mother, himselfe was the onely immediate, next

See this fully prov'd in *Speeds* Cloud of witnesses.

Heire

Heire to *Abiud*, & *Rhesa* sonnes of *Zerubbabel*, in whose *Line* the Crowne by *Right*, should have been invested after *Jechoniah*.

But he would not hold by *that tenure*: if he had, his *Birth* should not have bin so vile, and contemptible, nor his *life* so toilesome, and miserable. He would not have *begunne* his *State* in a Manger, nor should a *Cratch* have been his *Cradle*; and *brutish* attendants his neerest *Courtiers*. A scandall so great in the *fastuous* conceit of the *Priests*, and *Scribes*, that they would not be brought to acknowledge him to be the *Messias*, to whom they were to doe their *homage*, and sweare *allegeance*, although their forefather *Iacob* directly left it in his Testament, that when *Shiloh* came, all the shew, and *outward* pompe of the earthly *Scepter* should depart from *Iudah*, and *Zachary* in expresse tearmes proclaimed it to *Jerusalem*, *Behold thy King cometh to thee poore and lowly*. For the *Iewes*, who have been more diligent in the *custody* and *portage* of the old *Testament*, then in the true

Expoſition of it, were notable to diſcerne through ſo thick a *vaile* as lay over their eyes, plaine *Propheſies* from obſcure *Ænigmaes*, & therefore being deſirous to brave it in the fleſh, *phantaſtically* ſuppoſed that He who was to be borne *King* in their *Quarters* ſhould trample on the necks, and Crownes of *Princes*, looſen the chaines wherewith they were manacl'd by the *Romanes*, and make them all great, and powerfull *Potentates*.

But *the Lord raignes, be the Earth never ſo impatient: Non brachio ſæculari*, not by outward force over our goods and bodies, ſo terreſtriall *Rulers* exerciſe dominion. The weapons of his Kingdome, are of an *heavenly* nature, his *two edged* ſword cutts beyond the *marrow*, pierceth the deepeſt ſecrets, and retir'd cogitations of the inward *Cabinet*. The moſt obdurate ſinner that ſets up cavills, and raiſeth as it were bullwarks againſt the Lord, and his Anointed, feeles at one time or other, the power of his *Spirit*, ready to beat downe thoſe *ſtrong*

holds

holds of ſinfull imaginations. So that the breaſt of every carnall man hath that, which will ſpeak for ſubjection to *Chriſts* dominion. I will not wander beyond the *pale* of the Church, nor touch thoſe bad *humors* in the *myſticall* Body, which want *nerves*, and *ſinewes* of faith to unite them to the *Head*. Our Saviour's entire *Regiment* is among his true members, who receive ſenſe, motion, and *quickning* ſpirits out of his *Fulneſſe*. The Aſſemblies of the *Faithfull* are his *immediat* ſubjects, with whom his *Word* goes for a *Law*, and the *guidance* of his Spirit, for the *ſway* of his Scepter. In them he *Lordes* it as a *King* in his Kingdome, when their underſtandings deſire to know nothing but *him*, and what may ſtand with his *truth*; when their wills, and affections reſigne, and yeeld up all in obedience, and *conformity* to his *will*. He manifeſts the *might* of his *Supremacy* in their *reſcue* from the thraldome of ſinne, the *ſorcery* of the fleſh, and from the *vigour* of the Curſe. And that the world may know he

is

is κοσμοκράτωρ the great *Monarch* of the universe, *King* of *Kings*, and raigning over all that raignes, he makes all things *serviceable* to their good. Sometimes permitting the rage of *Tyrants* to grow on high, that thereby he may be glorified in the Courage, and constancy of his Servants amidst the *pangs* and torments of death. Otherwhiles he restraines the tyranny of their *Persecutors*, causing them on a sudden to become his *Peoples* humble *Oratours*.

The *Magi* guided by the holy Ghost, entitle him King of the *Iewes transcendently*, because his Kingdome of *Grace*, the *Standard* of the Gospell, was first advanc'd in their *Coasts*. They were his *Primogeniti*; and 'tis the *Prerogative* of the first begotten, to have a more honourable mention then others, which are *Aliens*. Yet his affection was not so *wedded* to that *Nation*, that he wholy put the *Gentiles* out of his protection. The *Pale* of *Palestine* was too restrain'd, too narrow for his bounds. His dominion was to be extended so farre as the

the Sunne *darts* his *beames*: the *Heathen* were given as his Inheritance, and the ends of the Earth for his Poſſeſsion. The promiſe of the ſeed of the woman, which ſhould break the *Serpent's* head, was made to *Adam* in Paradiſe as he repreſented the whole *Poſterity* of *Man-kinde*, and ſo no *Nation*, no *Condition* can ſhut out a good heart from *God*. Why was the *Stranger* which ſojourn'd among the *Hebrewes* capable of Circumciſion, the *pledge* and *ſeale* of *God's* favour, but to ſignifie that ſaving health was to be deriv'd from their *Tribes* to all the *Kinreds* of the Earth. Neither is it without a *myſtery* that in old Simeon's *Anthem* the *light* of the Gentiles is placed before the *glory* of Iſraell. *Tertullian* is ſo farre from giving preeminence to the *Iews* that *he* proves it was prefigur'd by the Birth of *Eſau*, and *Iacob*, that the elder people of the *Iewes* ſhould ſerve the younger of the *Gentiles*. Others will have their rejection to be ſhadow'd forth in *Gedeon's* dry *fleece*, and the vocation of the *Gentiles* in the wet Tertul. lib. adv. Iudæ.

 floore

floore. So that the *Jewes* were no more to be compar'd to the encreaſe of the *Gentills*, then the litle peece of *Wooll* to the whole *Floore*. Indeed the *Jewes* may truly beſaid to be like *Gedeon's* fleece; for as it was *wa-ter'd* with the raine of heaven when all the Land elſe was dry, ſo God did let fall the *dew* of his mercies on their *territories*, when he left all *other* places barren, and dryed up through want of the *influence* of his graces. But after their rebellion they became like *Gedeon's* fleece, which afterwards was on-ly dry, when there was *dew* on all the Earth beſides. They were at firſt to *God* as *Reu-ben* to *Iacob*, the ſtrength, and glory of his age; but by ingratitude with *Reuben* they loſt their *dignitie*, and with *Eſau* their *birth-right*. *Nam quomodo dicent Patrem cùm verum Dei Filium negant per quem adoptio acquiri-tur*? For with what comfort can they call *God* Father, who beleeve not in his onely *Sonne*, without whom they cannot bee a-dopted his *children*? *Quomodo Teſtamen-tum nuncupant, qui mortem Teſtatoris negant.*

S. Ambroſ. Ep. 73. l. 9.

What

What *right* can they have in the *Covenant*, who undervalue the *death* of the *Teſtator* by which 'tis ratified? *Quomodò libertatem uſurpant, qui negant ſanguinem, quo redempti ſunt?* How can they challenge the glorious *liberty* of the choſen, when they trample under their feet the *bloud* of their Redemption? In vaine doe they boaſt they are deſcended from *Abraham*, ſince he is not a *Jew* who is one *outward* in the fleſh, but *inward* in the Spirit. The Commonwealth of *Iſrael* is as well *Myſticall*, as *Literall*, and they are *right* heires to Chriſt's Kingdome, who reverence him as their *Lord*, & *King*. So that *wee* are the ſeed of *Iſrael*, having *prevailed* to be adopted God's people. For whereſoever true beleevers keep their *reſidence*, there the *Land* becomes *Iſrael*, & the *Church* Sion. *Quouſq; ergo Iudæe durißime?* S. Maxim. How long therefore ô thou carnall, ſtiffeneck'd *Iew*, wilt thou ſtop thy Eares againſt the Dictates of the *Patriark's*, and Teſtimonies of the *Prophets*? What a deadly obſtinacy hath poſſeſs'd *thy* heart above all o-

thers? Thou canſt not be perſwaded to *thy* ſalvation by the *tongues* of *Angels*, & yet the *Wiſemen* were confirm'd, and brought to *thy Chriſt* by the *ſight* of *one* ſtarre, which is the *motive* of their Journey, *vidimus ſtellam ejus*. Where is He that is borne King of the Jewes? for we have ſeen *his* Starre.

Cicero de Divinat.

Tully was of opinion that the world was fram'd in ſuch an order at the firſt beginning, *ut certis rebus quædam ſigna præcurrerent*, that certain ſignes, or tokens ſhould alwaies runne before certaine effects to give a *glimpſe*, or light of their approaching. But this rule cannot be extended unto all, for as it is falſe *Logick* to maintain an argument *affirmatively* from the *part* to the *whole*, ſo were it likewiſe a groſſe Errour in *Divinity* to preſſe *God*, as it were perforce, to reveale his pleaſure touching future events becauſe he hath given warning by expreſſe ſignes of *ſome* particulars. Yet the fruitleſſe *Plodders*, and *Prolers* in Nativities thought no matter of *importance* could fall out, without

without the ſame were ſignified before hand by the *Starres*. *Cardan* was ſo ſawcy as to *erect* a *Figure* of our *Saviour's* Birth: *Chriſt* ſaith he was borne *Primâ facie virginis aſcendente*, the firſt face of the *Virgin aſcending*, whoſe proper image is a *Virgin* nouriſhing a *Child*, and thereupon, grounds an aſſurance that the *Starres*, and *Planets* wrought in his *Nativity*. *Credo hoc nomine Chriſtum ſibi obligaverunt.* I think, as *Tertullian* ſpeaks ſcoffingly, ſuch *Figure-flingers* as theſe, bound *Chriſt* to their *profeßion*, by this courteſy of making the ſtarres to keep an *Audit* of his comming. But 'tis both impious, and ridiculous to ſuppoſe the influence of the *Planets* doe inſpire, and force effects, which are ordained by *God*. The Father is *round* with them. *Non eſt regnum cælorum ſperare, cujus radius, aut digitus abutitur cælo.* He cannot hope for the Kingdome of Heaven, who thus abuſeth heaven either with his *finger*, or his *Compaſſe*. Theſe execrable illuſions *ipſam propemodùm dei majeſtatem pulſant*,

Earle of North hāpton in his defenſative p. 108 ſo cites him.

Tertul. de Idololat.

Tertul. ut ſupra.

doe almoſt ſtrike at the *Almighties* ſoveraigne Majeſty, and make it as it were a *vaſſall* to the works of his owne hands. There is no doubt but the very minute wherein all the miracles, and mercies ſhould be wrought by *Chriſt* was fix'd in the Divine providence before the *world* was made. The fulneſſe of time in which *God* ſent his ſonne was no other time then that which his *Prophets*, and not the *Horoſcope* foretold. *Vidimus ſtellam ejus* (as 'tis in the Text) (i.) *Eum, qui habet ſtellam, non habetur à ſtella: Cujus ortum tenebat Autor, non quæ ortum tenebat Autoris.* Wee have ſeen *his* ſtarre (*i*) we have ſeen *him*, who govern'd the *ſtarre*, and not the ſtarre *him*. Very well doe they call it *his* ſtarre, becauſe although all the *ſtarres* being created by him are his, yet this was *Chriſt's* more *peculiarly*. The reſt of the ſtarres were made that they might *diſtinguiſh* the times, and ſeaſons, this was commanded to appeare that it might declare the Lord of the world, and the time of his heavenly Kingdome

Chryſol.

dome was *at hand*. *Stella erat non legifera, ſed ſignifera, non apparuit cæli climate, ſed virtute naſcentis.* *Chriſt's* nativity depended not upon the *ſtarre*, but the ſtarre on his *Nativity*, in reſpect whereof it was firſt created. Chryſol.

It cannot be that this *ſtarre* could be any of thoſe glorious lights either *fixed* or *planetary*, which in the creation were made for the *ornament* of heaven, and to enlighten *ſublunary* creatures. Betwixt them and this there are many differences, both in reſpect of its *motion*, *ſplendor*, *ſituation*, and the *manner* of appearing. All other ſtarres move *ad motum primi mobilis*, circularly, from the *Eaſt* towards the *Weſt*, whereas this *ſtarre* proceeded in a ſtraight line from the *Eaſt* towards the *South*. Other ſtarres appeare not in the day time, their light is obſcur'd by the light of the *Sunne*: this ſtarre appeard, and directed the *Wiſe-men* at *high noone*. Other ſtarres are placed in the heaven, this was not in the

firma-

firmament, but the *Aire*, otherwiſe it could not have pointed out the *way* to the *Wiſemen*, nor the *houſe* where the *Infant* lay. Laſtly this *Starre* did differ from other ſtars in the *manner* of appearing, for ſometimes it appeard, and ſometimes it did not; ſometimes it appear'd *moving*, and ſometimes *ſtanding*; ſo that it muſt needs follow it was no *common* ſtarre, remaining in the heaven from the beginning, but a new light deputed only to the honour of our *Saviour's* birth; and the ſervice of theſe *Magi*.

Now if you would know how they underſtood the office of this *ſtarre* was to be a *Conduct* to *Chriſt*, firſt we lay it as an undoubted truth they could not diſcover it by skill of the *Aſtrolabe*, that light was but a ſlight ground for a *ſupernaturall* beliefe. Some hold they had often heard from the Oracles of the *Sibils*, and their own Prophet *Balam* had ſpread it over all their Country, that there ſhould riſe a

ſtarre

Starre out of *Iacob*, and together with it a *Scepter* to *Israel*, as 'tis recorded in the Book of *Numbers*. This they learn'd, and this ranne in their mindes, this they made use of, and so comparing the *Prophecies* with the *Event*, they fell upon the right that this starre did portend σκηπτοῦχος, the *scepterd King* was borne to the *Iewes*.

J will not affirme, as some doe, that the holy *Spirit* himselfe assum'd the *figure*, and *forme* of this starre, but J may safely say that by vertue of his *spirit*, who is the *Morning Starre* of the *East*, which guides *Arcturus*, and his *Sonnes*, as *Job* speakes, they attain'd the knowledge how this starre did fore-tell the birth of the *Messiah*, which should *smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Seth*. The Eternall *word*, φῶς μέγα, that light of *truth* did illuminate their soules to understand what *Balam* their *Countreyman* had divulged. The starre was a *spark* of Christ's owne *kindling*; A *torch* which himselfe *lighted* to direct these

Vid. Maldonat. super Math. c. 1.

Wiſemens footſteps. For they ſay not wee have ſeen a new ſtarre in the ayre, ſtrange, and miraculous, but they adde the *particle* τ ἀστέρα, *the* ſtarre, thereby intimating they had ſeene a ſtarre *expected*, and formerly reveal'd. *Dedit aſpicientibus intellectum, qui præſtitit ſignum.* Certainly, ſaith *Leo* the great, he, which guided their *eye* outwardly inſpir'd their *heart* inwardly.

D. Leo.

And here from bringing the *Magi* to a new *Sunne* on *Earth* by a new *ſtarre* in *heaven* we may obſerve how ſweetly, and favourably the Lord deales in that hee wins men by thoſe meanes, which are *ſuteable*, and correſpondent to their *diſpoſitions*. Theſe *Aſtrologers* were ſtudious, and diligent to ſeeke after God in his *cœleſtiall* works, & therefore he teacheth them out of their *own book*, a *ſtarre* from heaven ſhall lead them to the place where *divine* knowledge is to be had. *God* is never *deficient* to him that is not ſo to *himſelfe*. Indeed our inbred corruption infects whatſoever is infus'd

infus'd into us, and ſo no goodneſſe in us of it ſelfe is a fit mover of the good graces of *God*, yet his *voluntary* favour, his frank, & free affection regards the ſmall *ſparkes*, and beginnings of light, which himſelfe hath *ſet up* in our ſoules, and though it burnes *dimme*, yet if we let it not goe out, but doe our beſt to *cleare* that *obſcure*, faint light, he will make us capable of a greater light. The weake, *waxen* wings of *nature* are not *ſufficient* to raiſe us to our ἄκμη of eternall happineſſe, yet if her faculties, by *grace enabled*, be well *husbanded*, rightly *managed*, they will not hinder an aſcending a degree, or two towards it. They cannot *ſave* us, they may ſome way *profit* us, if wee doe not ſit downe in the *beginnings* of knowledge, but with a willing minde goe on, and travell for more.

I ſuppoſe none will conceave the liberall intentions, & bountifull actions of *Morall honeſt* men to be evill *formally*, in the very *eſſence*, though they are ſo, being taken *circumſtantially*

cumſtantially, in reſpect they ayme not at the right *end*, *Chriſt's* glory, which makes them *ineffectuall*. For as *trueth* is truth *whereſoever* we finde it, ſo *good* ceaſeth not to be good in *whomſoever* it reſideth. If the *ſubject* ſhall alter the very *nature* of a quality, then the *miſplacing* of a vertue will prove its loſſe, & *deſtruction*; vertue ſhall *degenerate* into vice, and ſo two *oppoſites* may not onely agree, but grow into an inſeparable *union*, and be entirely *one*. The *Scripture* is ſo farre from crying downe *morall preparations*, that it preſſeth particulars of that kinde, which *God* hath ſo accepted that upon their right imployment he hath *graciouſly* pleas'd to *infuſe* a more ample meaſure of holineſſe, a further meanes of ſalvation. The *Eunuch* in the Acts was well affected to Religion in undertaking ſo long a journey as from *Æthiopia* to *Jeruſalem* for devotion ſake. The *Lord* regiſters his *religious* ſteps, and the *Spirit* convaies *Philip* to his Chariot to give him better inſtruction. *Cornelius* was a juſt man, and, which

was

was *ſtrange* in a *Captaine*, made up of almes, and good works, he was one that fear'd *God*, and this was the utmoſt period of his *explicit Creed* before he met with S. *Peter* for ought appeares in the text. The *Lord* takes notice of this devout diſpoſition, and in a viſion directs him how to ſend for *Peter* to be inform'd in the Knowledge of the *Goſpell*. The *Ancients* then who hop'd well of *morall honeſt men* are not too *uncharitably* to be cenſurd, for, as they urge, though *God* tyes *us* to the ordinary means, yet he hath not tyed *himſelfe*. Εὐγύϊα, or δ'φυία, *ingenuity* of nature, and other *morall* excellencies are not *oppoſite*, but *ſubordinate* to grace: Grace deſtroyes not, nor aboliſheth them, but *heales*, and perfects them. The *Wiſemen* deſir'd to improve their piety, and God *ſublimates* it, ſending his ſtarre as a *Harbinger* to draw them cloſer to him, & that out of the *Eaſt*, which is the place of the *ſtarre's* firſt appearing. *Where is he which is borne King of the Iewes?* We have ſeen *his* ſtarre in the *Eaſt*.

The *East*, as it followes in the *Evangeliſt*, was the place of the Starres *firſt* appearing that where *ſinne* abounded *grace* might ſuperabound. There *Sorcerers*, and Practiſers of helliſh Arts ſerv'd *Satan*, and thence ſhin'd a *ſpirituall* light to chaſe away *darke* ignorance, and ſpirituall wickedneſſe. *In lumine tuo videbunt lumen.* Jn *thy* light they ſhall ſee light ſaith *David*; S. Auſten. (*i*) *In Chriſto tuo videbunt gratiam.* In the Lords *Chriſt*, or Gods *Anoynted* they ſhall apprehend grace to be made partakers of the inheritance of the *Saints* in *Light*, who hath taken them out of the Kingdome of darkneſſe, and tranſlated them into the Kingdome of his deare *Sonne*. So true is that of *Eſay*, the people of the *Gentills*, which ſate in darkneſſe ſaw a great *light*, and light is riſen to them, which dwell in the region of the ſhadow of death.

And indeed not without good ground, did this new ſtarre appeare in that part of the world where the Sunne *riſeth*, ſince it

was

was to declare, the new riſeing of the Sunne of *righteouſneſſe*, which enlightens every one that comes into the world. Beſides, from whence ſhould our *faith* have its beginning, but from thence where the *Sunne* hath its firſt riſing, *faith* giving light to the ſoule, as the *Sunne* to the body. *Bonadventure* holds it fit in congruity, that from the *Eaſt* man ſhould firſt be taught to worſhip God, ſince in the *Eaſt* he had firſt offended him. 'Tis no vaine conceipt that our *Saviour* was pleas'd to be crucified with his back towards the *Eaſt*, to intimate he had *caſt behind* him, and quite forgot all ſinne, whoſe firſt footing was in the *Eaſt*. *Salmeron's* opinion concurring with the *Centuriſts* may ſeem probable that becauſe theſe *Firſt fruits* of the *Gentills* came from the *Eaſt*, well order'd Chriſtians in a commendable conformity to the *primitive* times, doe uſe *to pray* with their faces *that way*, as profeſsing how in the *perſons* of theſe *Wiſe-men* they receav'd the rudiments, and *Principles* of their *be-*

leefe

The *East*, as it followes in the *Evangeliſt*, was the place of the Starres *firſt* appearing, that where *ſinne* abounded *grace* might ſuperabound. There *Sorcerers*, and Practiſers of helliſh Arts ſerv'd *Satan*, and thence ſhin'd a *ſpirituall* light to chaſe away *darke* ignorance, and ſpirituall wickedneſſe. *In lumine tuo videbunt lumen.* In *thy* light they ſhall ſee light ſaith *David*; S. Auſten. (*i*) *In Chriſto tuo videbunt gratiam.* In the Lords *Chriſt*, or Gods *Anoynted* they ſhall apprehend grace to be made partakers of the inheritance of the *Saints* in *Light*, who hath taken them out of the Kingdome of darkneſſe, and tranſlated them into the Kingdome of his deare *Sonne*. So true is that of *Eſay*, the people of the *Gentills*, which ſate in darkneſſe ſaw a great *light*, and light is riſen to them, which dwell in the region of the ſhadow of death.

And indeed not without good ground, did this new ſtarre appeare in that part of the world where the Sunne *riſeth*, ſince it

was

was to declare, the new riſeing of the Sunne of *righteouſneſſe*, which enlightens every one that comes into the world. Beſides, from whence ſhould our *faith* have its beginning, but from thence where the *Sunne* hath its firſt riſing, *faith* giving light to the ſoule, as the *Sunne* to the body. *Bonadventure* holds it fit in congruity, that from the *Eaſt* man ſhould firſt be taught to worſhip God, ſince in the *Eaſt* he had firſt offended him. 'Tis no vaine conceipt that our *Saviour* was pleas'd to be crucified with his back towards the *Eaſt*, to intimate he had *caſt behind* him, and quite forgot all ſinne, whoſe firſt footing was in the *Eaſt*. *Salmeron's* opinion concurring with the *Centuriſts* may ſeem probable that becauſe theſe *Firſt fruits* of the *Gentills* came from the *Eaſt*, well order'd Chriſtians in a commendable conformity to the *primitive* times, doe uſe *to pray* with their faces *that way*, as profeſsing how in the *perſons* of theſe *Wiſe-men* they receav'd the rudiments, and *Principles* of their *be-*

leefe

leefe. The turning our *backs* to the *Weſt* when we are in religious devotions, may be morally uſefull againſt the *Jewes*, as ſignifying we believe *Chriſt's* death to be *paſs'd*, and *behind* us, and therefore we look to the *Eaſt*, thereby acknowledging both his *Reſurrection*, & comming againe to *Judgement*, who ſhall come as the lightning which cometh from the *Eaſt*, *Math.* 24. Hence the wiſdome of our *Church* hath order'd, that in ſituating Chriſtian bodies in the grave, their *faces* be ſetled *Eaſtward*, as thence expecting the glorious ſecond coming of their bleſſed *Saviour*. But I am to conſider for what end the *Wiſe-men* preſented themſelves to *Chriſt* at his firſt coming in the fleſh, and that's ſpecified in the cloſe of the verſe, it was to performe the *religious* Act of adoration, we have ſeen (ſay they) his ſtarre in the *Eaſt*, and are come to *worſhip* him.

The *Scribes*, and *Phariſees*, yea whole multitudes ſought our *Saviour*, but it was either

either to crucify him, or to entrap him in his ſpeech, to ſee his miracles, or to be fed with his loaves, and fiſhes. Theſe took by-paths, and wrong waies to come to *Chriſt*. The perſons in the Text ſought *viam in viâ*, the Lord of *truth* in the *true* way; they apprehended *Chriſt*, not only as the way *to life*, but as the *way*, and the *life*, which made them fall downe, and *worſhip* him. Wherein they acknowledged the *Sonne* of *Mary* to be the King of *Eternity*, adoration being the homage due to the *God* of heaven. But is it not ſtrange that the *circumciſed* ſhould deny him, who was borne King in the midſt of them, and yet the *uncircumciſed*, aliens to the *Covenant*, confeſſe his ſoveraigne power in *Ieruſalem*, the *Metropolis*, and Royall ſeat of the circumciſion? 'Tis an *Axiom* in Philoſophy *Quòd ſenſibile poſitum ſupra Senſorium non facit ſenſationem*, that an *object* too neere applied to its proper *Organ*, makes the ſenſe looſe its apprehenſion. As a hand laid too cloſe upon the eye cannot be diſcern'd, as it may

at a *distance*. Much after this manner it befell the *Iewes*. *Christ* being so neere to them, that he lineally descended from that *Nation*, they neglected a right application of him, and became so *blind* in the *sight* of him, who was the *light* of the world, that they could not see the glory of his power, and the *fruit* of his coming, whereas this bright starre of *righteousnesse* shin'd clearly in the region of darknesse. They, who dwelled farre off were carefull to follow the light of reason, and conscience, to improve, and make the best use of *prudentiall* motives. And here I must take leave to vary from *Calvin's* exposition, the current of *Antiquity* being against it. He would have the *Worship* in this place tender'd, not to be an act of *Religion*, but *Civility*.

Vide S. *Athan.* l. de Incarn. *Nazianz.* Orat. 9. S. August. Ser. 29. de Temp.

We deny not that προσκυνεῖν promiscuously signifies civill, and divine reverence, yet the Holy *Ghost* commonly useth it for a *religious* prostration of the body in the act of *adoration*. *Cornelius* his devout man-

ner

ner of worſhipping S. *Peter*, in the tenth of the Acts is expreſſed by προσκύνησις. The worſhip, which the foure and twenty *Elders* yeeld to *God* in the 19. of the *Revel.* is render'd by προσκυνῶν, and our Saviour applies it to Satan S. Math. 4. προσκυνήσεις, thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God. And in the ſame *religious* ſenſe, the word muſt be underſtood in my text, otherwiſe the *Wiſe men* had been ridiculous in undertaking ſuch a tedious journey, if the end of their coming were to worſhip a temporall *Prince*, who being newly borne could neither take notice of their *homage*, nor underſtand the honour was preſented to him. *Herod* might well be offended with this action, becauſe they were about to ſet up another King within his *Territories*. Their countreymen at home might ſuſpect them of ſeditious practiſes, as if they mean'd to bring in a forraigne *Ruler*. Wherefore I may ſafely conclude that the meanneſſe of *Chriſts* birth would have diminiſhed his glory even in

the judgement of thole *Wiſe men*, if they had not beleeved that He, whom they ſaw in the manger was *Ipſe Ille* that bare rule in heaven.

The *Vbiquitaries* in declining an irreligious neglect have fallen to exceſſe of piety by exhibiting *divine* worſhip to the *humane* nature *abſtractedly* from the divine, whereby they doe not much differ from Heathen Idolaters, who adore the *Creature* for the *Creator*. The *Schoole* is herein orthodox; *Adoratio latriæ non exhibetur humanitati Chriſti ratione ſuiipſius, ſed ratione divinitatis, cui unitur*: divine worſhip is not given to the humanity in reſpect of it ſelfe, but in regard of the Divinity to which it is united. *Divinitas ejus quo imus, humanitas ejus quâ imus*, ſo ſaith S. *Auſten*. His divinity is that whereunto we goe, his humanity is that whereby we goe: *at non alter in ſuo, Alter in noſtro*, yet he is not another in that which is his, and another in that which is ours, *ſed totus in ſuo, & totus in noſtro*,

Aqu. part. 3. q. 25. art. 2.

S. Auſt. tract. in Ioh. 42.

Paulinus Aquiliens. cont. Felicem l. 1. in Biblioth. pat.

stro, idem in utroq;. But whole in that which is his *owne*, and whole in that is *ours*, and the same in both. Hence it is that we doe not *terminate* our adoration in either nature a part, and *severally*, but we worship with *one* adoration the *God-head* with the *Man-hood* in the person of the Word. *Damascen* speaks it out, προσκυνῶ, saith he, τοῦ Χριστοῦ τὸ συναμφότερον. I forbeare to pursue these speculative *litigations*, being desirous rather to *stint* my selfe then to *lash* out. Give me leave then to summe up all with that which may excite devotion.

Concil. Constantinop. 5. Can. 9. juxta Concil. Ephes. c. 8.

Damas. l. 3. Orth. Fid. c. 8.

Quod fecit Magus *non faciet* Christianus? The Easterne *Sages* travell'd farre in the eztremity of *winter* to present a solemne worship to our Lord, and Saviour, where are they that will scarce *step* out of doores to *God's* publique worship, when the *Church* stands hard by, if perchance there fall a few drops of raine to wet their *dresse*, or to *discolour* their shooes? *These* in the

text had but the *irradiation* of one ſtarre for a *Convoy* to *Chriſt*, we have a *Conſtellation* of many ſtarres, and ſome of the firſt *Magnitude*, ſhining cleerely in this *Horizon*. Eminent, and powerfull Preachers of the *Goſpell*, thoſe great *Lights* of the *Church* have a long time convey'd a bright illuſtration upon this *Goſhen*, this our land of light, and ſhall we come ſhort of the *darkeſt* times in the *luſtre* of religion? What a ſhame is it that they ſhould be more devout before the *Manger* in the ſtate of Chriſt's *humiliation* then wee are before the *Altar* now he is in the height of his *Exaltation!* All the *poſtures* of their bodies, and ſoules were awfully affected to *Chriſt's* infinite gentleneſſe, & goodneſſe, even then, when he made a *Stable* the *Chamber* of his *Preſence*. And therefore 'tis to be fear'd, if we leave not of our prophane careleſneſſe, that the men of the *Eaſt* will riſe up in Judgement againſt the Men of the *Weſt* (i) againſt many in our daies, who preſent themſelves in the *Courts* of the *Lord* at

times

times of divine ſervice in *ambulatory* motions, *irreverent* deportments, *vaine* Communications, as if they made litle or no difference betwixt the *Exchange*, and the *Church*, the common *Taverne*, and the ſacred *Tabernacle*.

But let us, who acknowledge *Chriſt* our *Leige* Prince, and Soveraigne, like good ſubjects humbly ſeek, & come to this *God Incarnate*, falling down at the *Manger*, and at the lap of the Virgin, where this bleſſed *Childe* lyeth ('tis *Luthers* zealous exhortation on the Galath.) and there behold him given to us, borne for us, ſucking, growing, dying, riſing againe, aſcending above the heavens that he may at length bring us thither, where we ſhall ſee him *face* to *face*, which we beſeech him to grant us for his mercies, and merits ſake. AMEN.

FINIS.